

# WORKFORCE OBSERVATIONS

## FOR MILWAUKEE COUNTY/WOW COUNTIES

### MAY 2003



#### April Brings Lower Unemployment Rates

The **Milwaukee-Waukesha Metropolitan Statistical Area** unemployment rate registered 5.9 percent in April. This not seasonally adjusted rate is four-tenths of a percent point lower than March's figure and is one-tenth of a point lower than the unemployment rate in April 2002. The metro area labor force figures show 960 fewer people employed since March, coupled with a decrease of 3,350 unemployed, precipitating the monthly decrease in the unemployment rate. April is typically deemed a month of labor force expansion from a statewide view. The Milwaukee area did not see expansion in April for the third straight year. The number of unemployed did decrease in April, but the number of employed did as well. This is very telling of a continued sluggish labor market and may indicate that some have delayed job searches until more opportunities arise in the coming months. On a brighter note, annually, all four counties show more people employed than at this time last year, and only one of the counties, Washington County, shows an increase the number of unemployed.

Despite the relatively higher unemployment rate that began in early 2001, the Milwaukee area labor force is following a typical seasonal pattern. Unemployment rate figures in May would be expected to level off or decrease slightly compared to April, given the continuation of seasonal trends.

**Milwaukee County's** unemployment rate was 6.8 percent in April, down from March's rate by three-tenths of a point and lower by one-tenth of a point from last April. It is encouraging that the rate is a bit lower than in 2002, but the current year is still at heightened level of unemployment relative to years past.

**Washington County's** April unemployment rate was 5.5 percent. This is lower than the previous month's rate by seven-tenths of a point, but is higher than last April's clip by one-half a percent point. Washington was the only metro county to show an annual increase in its unemployment rate.

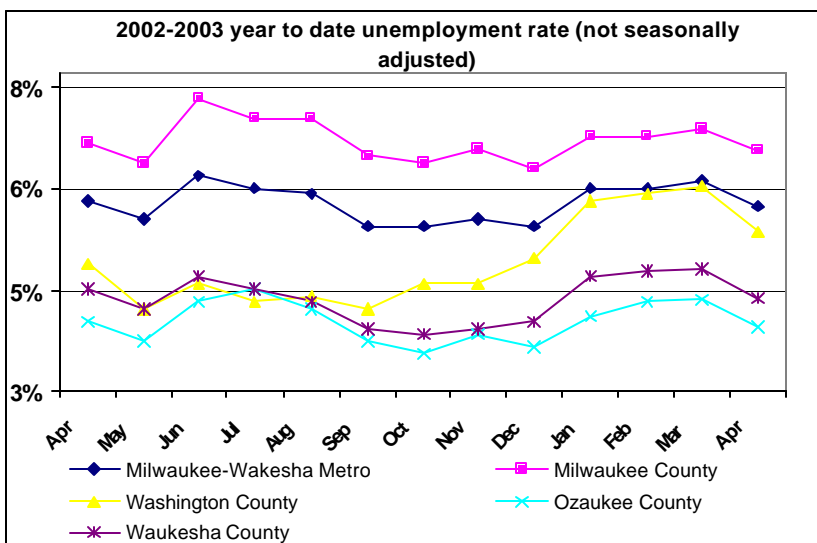
**Ozaukee County** had the lowest rate in the metro area at 4.0 percent. April's rate is four-tenths of point lower than in March and lower than the April 2002 rate by one-tenth of a point.

**Waukesha County's** unemployment rate was 4.5 percent in April. This is five-tenths of a point lower than March's rate and is two-tenths of a point lower than last April's. April's rate is reminiscent of the unemployment rates of the early 1990's.

#### Industry Employment Figures Rise Slightly in April

The **Milwaukee-Waukesha Metropolitan Statistical Area** nonfarm wage and salary estimates survey of industry employment indicate 6,700 new jobs over the month. This is a net increase that shows increased employment in almost every major industry category, except professional and business services (100 jobs) and wholesale trade (300 jobs). These two industries are strongly connected to the manufacturing sector, which, itself, shed about 400 jobs over the month. A point of interest this month is that durable goods

manufacturing employment increased by 300 jobs (mainly in fabricated metal products), while nondurable employment decreased by 700 jobs. This necessitated the net decrease in manufacturing employment. Construction employment showed the largest monthly employment increase in the metro area, 2,600 jobs; a very typical level of increase for April in an industry that is somewhat slowing in employ-



ment over the last year

April's monthly net increase in the number of jobs is fairly average for the metro area, though the annual perspective is not as bright. Compared to April 2002, the metro area has 8,700 fewer jobs, net. Manufacturing and professional and business services are running deficits of over 5,000 jobs, each. Trade employment has decreased by 1,200 jobs. Annual employment growth is seen in financial activities and education and health services employment, combining for almost 5,000 jobs or 2.6 percent growth in these large services-producing sectors.

<b>April 2003</b>	<b>Wisconsin</b>	<b>Milwaukee-Waukesha MSA</b>	<b>Milwaukee County/WDA</b>	<b>Washington County</b>	<b>Ozaukee County</b>	<b>Waukesha County</b>	<b>W-O-W WDA</b>
<b>Civilian Labor Force*</b>	3,074,457	818,113	484,035	69,837	48,583	215,657	334,077
Persons Employed	2,896,644	769,773	451,127	65,992	46,634	206,020	318,646
Persons Unemployed	177,813	48,340	32,908	3,845	1,949	9,637	15,431
Unemployment Rate	5.8%	5.9%	6.8%	5.5%	4.0%	4.5%	4.6%
<b>Total jobs of all non-farm industries** (Thousands)</b>	2,765.1	831.4	528.5	47.3	37.5	218.0	302.8
<b>Goods Producing Jobs</b>	627.2	171.1	82.4	16.2	11.7	60.8	88.7
<b>Service Producing Jobs</b>	2,137.9	660.3	446.1	31.1	25.8	157.2	212.6
Construction, Mining and Natural Resources	112.6	32.1	12.6	2.8	1.5	15.2	17.9
All Manufacturing	514.6	139.0	69.8	13.4	10.2	45.6	69.4
Total Trade	425.0	122.2	67.0	7.3	5.4	42.4	54.9
Wholesale Trade	115.0	40.0	20.2	2.0	1.4	16.4	20.0
Retail Trade	310.0	82.2	46.8	5.3	4.0	26.0	35.0
Transportation, Warehousing and Utilities	104.6	30.1	22.4	1.6	0.5	5.7	7.5
Financial Activities	155.7	59.5	41.2	2.0	2.1	14.2	18.1
Education and Health Services	362.5	128.7	94.6	5.3	4.4	24.4	34.1
Leisure & Hospitality	232.7	61.3	39.3	4.3	3.0	14.7	21.4
Information, Professional and Business Services, Other Services	430.0	160.8	112.0	5.3	5.9	37.6	48.7
Information	50.8	19.7	13.5	0.5	0.3	5.4	6.1
Professional and Business Services	239.6	99.5	71.8	2.2	3.7	21.8	27.7
Other Services	139.6	41.6	26.7	2.6	1.9	10.4	14.9
All Government	427.4	97.7	69.6	5.3	4.5	18.3	27.9
<b>Change from March 2003</b>							
<b>Civilian Labor Force*</b>	-7,780	-4,490	-2,300	-610	-270	-1,310	-2,190
Persons Employed	14,390	-960	-560	-80	-60	-260	-400
Persons Unemployed	-22,170	-3,530	-1,730	-530	-220	-1,050	-1,790
Unemployment Rate	-0.7%	-0.4%	-0.3%	-0.7%	-0.4%	-0.5%	-0.5%
<b>Total jobs of all non-farm industries** (Thousands)</b>	25.5	6.7	3.8	0.4	0.3	2.2	2.9
<b>Goods Producing Jobs</b>	8.9	2.2	0.8	0.2	0.1	1.1	1.4
<b>Service Producing Jobs</b>	16.6	4.5	3.0	0.2	0.2	1.1	1.5
Construction, Mining and Natural Resources	10.0	2.6	1.0	0.2	0.1	1.2	1.6
All Manufacturing	-1.1	-0.4	-0.2	0.0	0.0	-0.1	-0.2
Total Trade	2.6	0.5	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.2
Wholesale Trade	0.0	-0.3	-0.2	0.0	0.0	-0.1	-0.1
Retail Trade	2.6	0.8	0.5	0.1	0.0	0.3	0.3
Transportation, Warehousing and Utilities	0.4	0.6	0.4	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.2
Financial Activities	2.3	0.8	0.6	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.2
Education and Health Services	-0.6	0.3	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.1
Leisure & Hospitality	6.1	1.6	1.0	0.1	0.1	0.4	0.6
Information, Professional and Business Services, Other Services	4.3	0.3	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.1
Information	0.3	0.2	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.1
Professional and Business Services	4.1	-0.1	-0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Other Services	-0.1	0.2	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.1
All Government	1.5	0.4	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.1
<b>Change from April 2002</b>							
<b>Civilian Labor Force*</b>	62,660	3,410	1,790	740	190	700	1,630
Persons Employed	63,370	3,810	2,230	330	230	1,020	1,580
Persons Unemployed	-710	-400	-450	410	-50	-320	50
Unemployment Rate	-0.1%	-0.1%	-0.1%	0.5%	-0.1%	-0.2%	0.0%
<b>Total jobs of all non-farm industries** (Thousands)</b>	-0.8	-8.7	-4.6	-0.6	-0.5	-2.9	-4.1
<b>Goods Producing Jobs</b>	-19.4	-5.8	-2.8	-0.6	-0.4	-2.0	-2.9
<b>Service Producing Jobs</b>	18.6	-2.9	-1.8	-0.1	-0.1	-0.9	-1.1
Construction, Mining and Natural Resources	-8.9	-0.5	-0.2	0.0	0.0	-0.2	-0.3
All Manufacturing	-10.6	-5.3	-2.6	-0.5	-0.4	-1.7	-2.6
Total Trade	0.5	-1.2	-0.6	-0.1	0.0	-0.5	-0.6
Wholesale Trade	1.2	-0.8	-0.4	0.0	0.0	-0.3	-0.4
Retail Trade	-0.7	-0.4	-0.2	0.0	0.0	-0.1	-0.2
Transportation, Warehousing and Utilities	0.1	-0.4	-0.3	0.0	0.0	-0.1	-0.1
Financial Activities	3.4	2.2	1.5	0.1	0.1	0.5	0.7
Education and Health Services	6.9	2.6	1.9	0.1	0.1	0.5	0.7
Leisure & Hospitality	1.3	-1.8	-1.2	-0.1	-0.1	-0.4	-0.7
Information, Professional and Business Services, Other Services	7.3	-5.3	-3.9	-0.1	-0.2	-1.1	-1.4
Information	-0.2	0.2	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.1
Professional and Business Services	-0.2	-5.8	-4.2	-0.1	-0.2	-1.3	-1.6
Other Services	7.7	0.3	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.1
All Government	-0.9	1.0	0.7	0.1	0.0	0.2	0.3

\* Labor force figures are **not** seasonally adjusted and are commonly revised. Figures from "place of residence" survey from the Bureau of Labor Statistics' Local Area Unemployment Statistics program. \*\*Figures based upon "place of employment" survey from the BLS, Non-Farm Wage and Salary estimates.

Month and year ago change figures are rounded and may not sum to total

Questions and comments regarding this publication are welcome. Direct to: **Eric Grosso, State Labor Market Economist**

201 E. Washington Avenue, Room G200, Madison, Wisconsin 53703

608-266-7034 608-266-5887(FAX) E-mail: [eric.grosso@dwd.state.wi.us](mailto:eric.grosso@dwd.state.wi.us)

Look for the most current Labor Market Information at: [WWW.DWD.STATE.WI.US/LMI](http://WWW.DWD.STATE.WI.US/LMI)